

K-4322

NPIC/CSD 558/65
4 NOVEMBER 1965
PAGE 4

25X1

ROUTE 12
MU GIA PASS AREA, LAOS

(SEE NPIC BRIEFING BOARDS J-0639, J-0641, J-4026, J-4765, J-6082)

1. COLLATERAL REPORTS THAT NORTH VIETNAM ROUTE 15/12 AND ROUTE 12, ITS EXTENSION TO THE JUNCTION WITH ROUTE 23 IN LAOS, IS THE BEGINNING OF THE SUPPLY ROUTE FOR TROOPS IN SOUTHERN LAOS.

NORTH VIETNAM ROUTE 15/12 IS AN IMPORTANT ROUTE CONNECTING ROUTE 1A IN NORTH VIETNAM WITH THE LAOTIAN HIGHWAY NETWORK IN THE SOUTHERN PAN-HANDLE REGION. THIS 82-MILE ROUTE HAS A SURFACE OF IMPROVED EARTH AND GRAVEL, GENERALLY IN FAIR CONDITION. SURFACE WIDTHS VARY FROM TWELVE TO TWENTY FEET. OFF ROAD DISPERSAL AND MOVEMENT ARE AFFECTED BY FLOODS IN THE LOWLANDS AND BY LANDSLIDES AND DENSE FORESTS IN THE MOUNTAIN AREAS.

LAOTIAN ROUTE 12 EXTENDS GENERALLY WEST FROM THE NORTH VIETNAM BORDER FOR 95 NM AND TERMINATES AT THAKHEK, LAOS. THE SURFACE IS GENERALLY OF GRAVEL WITH SOME OLD BITUMINOUS TREATMENT. THE ROAD IS APPROXIMATELY TWELVE FEET WIDE AND HAS NO SHOULDERS. OFF ROAD MOVEMENT IS RESTRICTED BY DENSE FORESTS AND MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN NEAR THE BORDER.

SINCE THE PATHET LAO GAINED CONTROL OF THIS AREA IN 1961, THE MU GIA PASS AREA OF ROUTE 12, ON THE LAOS/NORTH VIETNAM BORDER SIXTY NM SOUTH-SOUTHWEST OF VINH, HAS BEEN CONSIDERED A PRIMARY POINT OF ENTRY INTO LAOS FROM NORTH VIETNAM FOR SUPPLIES AND TROOPS DESTINED TO SUPPORT THE VIET CONG EFFORT IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. THE PATTERN OF TRUCK TRAFFIC, THE CONSTRUCTION OF MU GIA PASS ARMY BARRACKS AND SUPPLY POINT,

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SECRET

K-4322

NPIC/CSD 558/65
4 NOVEMBER 1965
PAGE 5

AND THE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE AND REPAIR THE ROAD EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS AREA ON A VITAL ROAD LINK.

2. STRIKE DATA REPORTS THAT THE MU GIA PASS AREA HAS BEEN THE OBJECT OF AIR STRIKES ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS. EXTENSIVE REPAIR ACTIVITY'S ON ROUTE 12 IN THIS AREA HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTED IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE SERVICEABILITY OF THE ROUTE.

3.

REVEALS ROUTE 12 IN THE

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MU GIA PASS AREA TO BE SERVICEABLE FOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC FROM THE MU GIA PASS ARMY BARRACKS AND SUPPLY POINT [REDACTED] AT 1740N 10546E TO THE JUNCTION OF LAOTIAN ROUTES 12 AND 23 AT 1734N 10543E. THE MU GIA PASS CHOKING POINT, LOCATED 4.9 NM SOUTH-SOUTHWEST OF THE BORDER AT 1735N 10544E, HAS UNDERGONE EXTENSIVE REPAIRS TO THE AREAS OF INTERDICTION. ALL INTERDICTION POINTS HAVE BEEN FILLED OR BY-PASSED AND VEHICLE TRACKS ARE NOTED THROUGHOUT THE IMAGED PORTION OF ROUTE 12. ALL BUILDINGS AT THE MU GIA PASS ARMY BARRACKS AND SUPPLY POINT HAVE BEEN DAMAGED OR DESTROYED.

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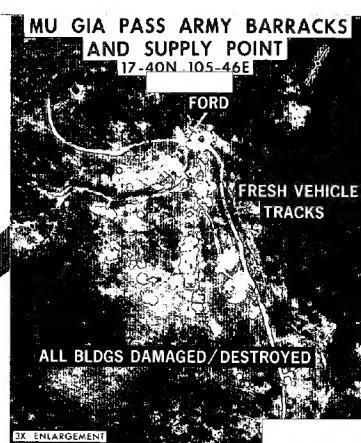
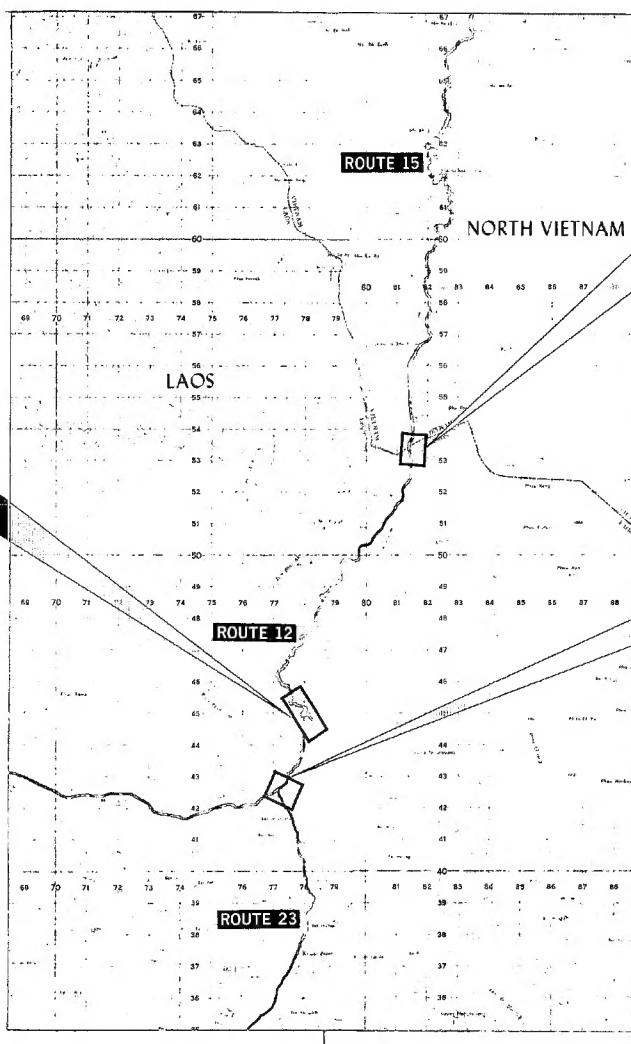
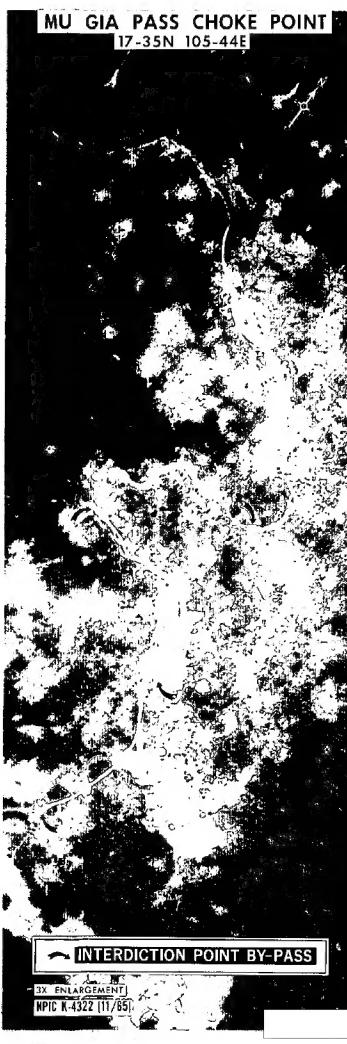
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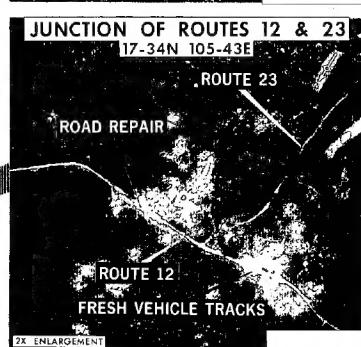
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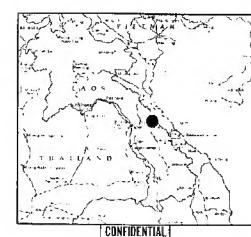
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